

day that many Members of this body will be at the funeral of a distinguished statesman, a Republican colleague, the late Honorable Steve Schiff in Albuquerque.

Unfortunately, on Monday, it will not only be Mr. Schiff who is buried, but campaign finance, an incredible action in which Members are denied any opportunity to offer an amendment, any opportunity to debate beyond 20 minutes per side, and in which, if after all those contortions to defeat campaign finance, if that is not enough, if only a simple majority of this body should vote for campaign finance reform, it would be defeated because they demand a two-thirds vote. A disgrace has occurred here today.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. BURTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I was going to take a 5-minute special order, but because of all the tactics that have been employed today, I will not have that time to get into the details.

I would just like to say that the outrage that has been expressed regarding the campaign finance reform bill should also include the dilatory tactics employed by the White House in keeping the Independent Counsel from getting information that is necessary to conclude his investigation into illegal campaign finances and into the allegations that took place down at the White House regarding Ms. Lewinsky.

Now the White House is claiming executive privilege to drag this investigation out and drag it out and drag it out and keep Mr. Starr from getting to the bottom of it. They have done this on four separate occasions here in the House of Representatives by claiming executive privilege. It did not work. They have done it three times in the courts, and it did not work. It will not work this time.

But the White House continues to drag it out and drag it out. And the President continues to take these trips abroad to try to take attention away from this scandal that is taking place. It will not work.

But the President should make a clean breast of this and stop this from going on and on and on as he has over the past several months. He should not claim executive privilege. It has not worked in the past, and it will not work now.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, as the newest Member of Congress, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

I am very interested in campaign finance reform, and I wish to know how to sign the discharge petition which will bring this discussion to the floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The petition resides with the Journal Clerk at the desk.

Mrs. CAPPS. I thank the Speaker. May I sign it now?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Yes.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. MEEHAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe what we have just heard from the other side of the aisle here, the substance of which was pathetic. Can you imagine trying some way, somehow to excuse the outrageous behavior of the Republican leadership on the floor of House of Representatives right now?

Every major newspaper in the country was outraged at the fact that they had a rigged rule. If that was not bad enough to have a rigged rule, they took that off, because the McCain-Feingold-Shays-Meehan bill was about to pass this House. Now they are going to bring up the campaign financial reform suspension, unprecedented, that requires a two-thirds vote before anything could pass.

The leaders of campaign finance reform in this institution are outraged. The American people get what is going on. It is an outrage that this leadership is going to, after promising campaign finance reform, is going to bring this up when one of our Members is being buried and other Members want to be out at the service.

I cannot believe the total disregard to the public interest that we have seen here this afternoon, an absolute outrage. I have never seen it this bad before. The American people see what is going on here, and it is a disgrace.

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SHAMEFUL LEADERSHIP PLAGUES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(Mr. WEYGAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, I am a member of the freshman class, a freshman class that came in here on the role of amending our campaign finance laws to make it better for all citizens to participate in this Congress. It was a bipartisan commission of freshmen, freshmen Republicans and Democrats, who crafted a bill, who worked hard all last year and this year.

So what does the Republican leadership do here today? It says, to heck with all that you have done, to heck with the people of America, do not consider what is a bipartisan, good-faith effort to revise our laws with regard to an open government. We are going to close it down. We are going to take what we have done in a smoke-filled back room and put it before you and try to jam it down the throats of America. That is what the Republican leadership has said here today.

We should be ashamed of what they have done, we should be ashamed of the

leadership that they have shown America, and we should vote down anything they present to us next week; and I ask my fellow colleagues, particularly the freshmen, to oppose what they are doing to us next week and oppose what they are doing to America.

REPUBLICANS CANNOT STAND OPEN DEBATE ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, after 15 months, after 15 months and campaign scandals across this country, the best the Republican leadership can come up with is to give Members in the House of Representatives 20 minutes of debate on hand-picked, hand-selected pieces of the campaign finance reform issue.

It is an insult to the American people, it is an insult to the membership of this House, it is an insult to the constituents that we represent, because we tell them that we can come here and debate the great issues that confront this country, but NEWT GINGRICH and the Republicans have decided they cannot stand an open debate on campaign finance reform. They cannot stand a little bit of sunshine on an issue that plagues our democratic institutions, scandals that are across this country, scandals that beset every officeholder in this country, but we cannot debate it in front of the American people.

While Members are away at a funeral, they are going to debate it and then vote later that night. It is an insult. It is no wonder, 20 minutes after 15 months, 20 minutes. That is the best that Speaker GINGRICH can come up with. What a fraud, what a deception. No wonder we are adjourning on April Fools Day.

No wonder we are adjourning, because the fools are going home without doing campaign finance reform.

REPUBLICANS SHOULD RECONSIDER SHAMEFUL TACTICS

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I serve on the Committee on House Oversight. It was said that this legislation was brought to the committee. Let me disabuse any of my colleagues on the theory that this got any kind of thoughtful consideration in committee. It certainly will not receive any thoughtful consideration on the floor under the procedures that have been devised by the majority.

A bill was noticed to the members of the committee less than 24 hours before we marked it up in committee. We met, we offered some substantive amendments; they were rejected on a straight party line vote, and without

further discussion, this bill was adopted. It was supposed to come to the floor this Thursday.

We thought it was going to come to the floor with a motion to recommit so we could have offered McCain-Feingold. However, the Republican majority was even afraid of that procedure, limited though it was, so they have now devised a procedure which will allow not one single suggestion other than that which has been written in the back room by the Republican majority.

What a travesty. Not only will we not get campaign finance reform, but we will have a procedure that will further denigrate the democratic process that this House likes to pride itself on.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that cooler, more rational heads would prevail, and that the Republican majority would reconsider this shameful process that they are foisting on the American public.

OUR DEMOCRACY IS DYING

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, our democracy is dying under a flood of special interest campaign dollars, and it is a problem on both sides of the aisle, I admit that, and it needs to change. But the Republican leaders today, instead of tossing the American people and our democracy a life preserver with real campaign finance reform, tossed out a big lead sinker.

The debate on Monday will require a two-thirds vote to pass any tiny part of what they have deemed to be campaign finance reform, which does not even go to the heart of the issue, the soft money to the so-called "issue ads," and why is that? Because apparently, for now, according to the New York Times, there is a majority in the House to pass an overhaul bill that would ban political parties from taking unregulated money known as "soft money" and would also curb issue ads by outside groups. It is fiercely opposed by the Republican leaders whose party generally has a fund-raising advantage.

Fiercely opposed, they did more than fiercely oppose it; they gutted democracy here today on the floor with this travesty. That will be nothing but a travesty of a debate on Monday.

It is disgusting, the worst thing I have seen in 11½ years in this House of Representatives.

REPUBLICAN TACTICS ARE A SHAM

(Mr. FARR of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to show my shock at this House's procedure in bringing up campaign finance reform.

Let us recall a little bit of history. When the Democrats were in control of this House, we passed out campaign finance reform in every session. The bill was vetoed by President Bush, the bill that we passed out was filibustered by the Republican Senate, and now, when the President of the United States comes to this hall and asks the Republican leadership to give a campaign finance reform bill to him, last year and they failed, they have now scheduled it the same day that they are sending half the House to New Mexico for a funeral, they are limiting debate to 20 minutes, and they are requiring a two-thirds vote.

Now, if we do not need some reform of the reform, then we are crazy. This is a sham, and the American public will know it is a sham and demand campaign finance reform in a true fashion, such as the Democratic bill or the Shays-Meehan bill, be voted on in this House with a good, solid debate.

ORDINARY CITIZENS NEED A FAIR CHANCE TO GET ELECTED

(Mr. ABERCROMBIE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I was first elected to the State house of representatives in the State of Hawaii in 1974, when we had campaign expenditure limitations. I found myself in a contest with very wealthy people and a high-ranking bank official; I had to depend upon the goodwill of many of the young people who supported me. We did grass-roots efforts.

I would like to have the opportunity for any citizen to be able to run for office, as I did, and have an opportunity to be elected. That is why it is so important for us to take up these various forms of campaign finance reform. I do not pretend to have the final answer, and I do not think that the final answer necessarily exists in all of these bills, but surely we deserve the opportunity to vote on it.

In this particular instance where campaign finance reform is concerned, we have seen over and over again the press saying that the Congress failed to do it, or the House failed to do it. In this instance, I hope it will be noted by the public and by the press that takes this information to the public that it is Mr. GINGRICH and the Republican leadership which is thwarting the opportunity for us to be able to vote on campaign finance reform.

Please give us that opportunity. Let the ordinary, average citizen have a chance again in this democracy.

TIME TO KEEP THE PROMISES

(Mr. VENTO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, next week we have got time for some things to do

on this floor. For months we have had floating around here a bill called H.R. 10 that deals with modernization of financial services and, lo and behold, next week, in that week when we do not have time to deal with campaign finance reform, we have this 400- or 500-page bill, and we have the time, thanks to the House leadership.

A full-page ad in the paper today to deal with the problems of American insurance, the Council of Insurance Agents, the investment bankers, J.P. Morgan, we have time for that next week; but what about trying to reform the process around here in which we can get a people's bill on the agenda like campaign reform? That is what is important. But this bill has a priority over that, Mr. Speaker, and I think it ought not to have that priority. I think we ought to get our act together and do it right.

This can wait. This does not have to be jammed down our throats next week. What we need to do is deal with the campaign reform problem. It is 15 months past due. It is time to face up to this and meet the promises and commitments that were made around here last week.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOBSON). The gentleman will state it.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, if the debate is held on campaign finance reform during the day, is the House going in at 12:00, first of all?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That order has not yet been set.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, if the debate is held during the afternoon, are procedural votes in order during the debate, before and after the suspensions?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The ordinary rules of the House will apply.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, a further parliamentary inquiry. Would a motion to adjourn be in order?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Yes, during the legislative session.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, would a quorum call be in order?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. No, not by way of a point of order. Where a question has not been put to a vote.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, it would not be in order, so a motion to adjourn would, at a minimum, be in order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That is the Chair's understanding.

Mr. MILLER of California. I thank the Speaker. I would just say that the cloakrooms ought to inform Members that if campaign finance reform is brought up, they should expect procedural votes on Monday.